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# Bayan

PAHAYAGAN NG PARTIDO KOMUNISTA NG PILIPINAS  
PINAPATNUBAYAN NG  
MARXISMO-LENINISMO-MAOISMO

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## Statement of the Communist Party of the Philippines on the victorious EDSA uprising against the Estrada regime



Central Committee  
Communist Party of the Philippines  
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The Communist Party of the Philippines ardently salutes the brilliant victory of the people's uprising that ousted the much-despised and rotten Estrada regime. More than anything, it is the people's heroism that swiftly removed Estrada from Malacañang.

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EDSA 2, like EDSA 1, is a victorious people's struggle that is worthy of praise. Nonetheless, the people strongly desire that there be no more reprises of their frustration over the changes promised by EDSA 1.

The masses who fearlessly advanced to topple Estrada will not be satisfied with mere pretenses and tokenisms. It is completely within their rights to demand that the Macapagal-Arroyo government seriously uphold national and social change.

It is the Macapagal-Arroyo government's responsibility to put the people's agenda at the center of its governance, especially those changes that the extremely impoverished and oppressed masses have long been fighting for. Among these are the following:

1. Immediate prosecution of Estrada and his cronies for plunder and other crimes. Recovery of their ill-gotten wealth in order to fund programs that are genuinely for the poor.
2. Thoroughgoing and sincere campaign against graft and corruption in government.
3. Immediate remedies and long-term improvement of employment, wages, housing and social services for the poor in the cities and countryside.
4. Genuine land reform for the peasant masses.
5. Repeal of the policies of denationalization, deregulation, liberalization, contractualization, casualization and other forms of enslavement resulting from imperialist globalization.

6. Repudiation of militarization, militarism and total war. Sincere pursuit of peace talks between the GRP and the NDFP, which were sabotaged by the Estrada regime.

7. Justice for victims of militarization, militarism and total war. Release of all political prisoners.

8. Abrogation of the Visiting Forces Agreement and opposition to US intervention in the country's internal affairs.

Despite Estrada's ouster, the chronic socio-economic crisis of the semicolonial and semifeudal ruling system continues. It is this crisis, aside from the extreme avarice and arrogance of the Estrada faction, that is behind the crisis and overthrow of Estrada after a mere two and a half years.

The Communist Party and New People's Army continue, and are further determined, to advance the people's democratic revolution and people's war until total victory. Alongside, we are likewise further determined to unite and cooperate with all democratic, progressive and sincere forces, groups and elements to fight for the Filipino people's national and democratic welfare.

**Long live the heroic Filipino people!**

**Continue the struggle until genuine democracy, national freedom and progress are achieved!**

**Advance the people's democratic revolution to total victory!**

# The overthrow of the US-Estrada regime and our tasks under the Macapagal-Arroyo regime

The Filipino people celebrate their victory in ousting the US-Estrada regime. Through the broad unity and action of hundreds of thousands at EDSA and in the streets of other cities and towns across the country, the Filipino people put an end to the unbridled reign of crime, corruption, fascism and puppetry under the US-Estrada regime.

The Party is aware that the ouster of Estrada does not resolve the Filipino people's fundamental problems that brought about the current severe political and economic crisis. It is thus necessary for the Filipino people to continue in firmly advancing their national and democratic interests and intensify their revolutionary struggle in all arenas all over the country.

## MASSIVE DEMONSTRATIONS THROUGHOUT THE NATION TOPPLED THE US-ESTRADA REGIME

The US-Estrada regime was toppled by the massive demonstrations that started in November 2000 and culminated in the January 17-20 movement of hundreds of thousands throughout the nation, including the gigantic demonstration at EDSA.

The sustained mass struggles since 1998 and specifically, the call of the forces of the national democratic movement since the early part of 2000 to end the US-Estrada regime paved the way for Estrada's ouster. The demonstrations further spread when Gov. Luis Singson bolted the Estrada camp in October 2000 and exposed Estrada's anomalies and criminal activities.

The massive demonstrations were made possible by the broad anti-Estrada united front. This consisted mainly of the basic forces of the national democratic movement, the petty bourgeois forces, in general, and the middle bourgeoisie who were critical of the corruption of the ruling system; and the anti-Estrada reactionaries.

Contrary to what the reactionary politicians would like to portray, the defection of the AFP and PNP's leadership on January 19 was not the decisive factor in

Estrada's ouster. In fact, this defection of the military and the police was but the last act in the Estrada government's collapse. In the AFP and PNP's rejection of Estrada, the people dismantled the last pillar that propped Estrada up. After this, Estrada's actual resignation became secondary in significance.

The entire leadership and organization of the military and police repudiated Estrada in line with the orders of Pentagon agents who were, at that time, stationed at the US Embassy in the Philippines. US imperialism was primarily concerned with the danger of a major breakup within the military and the police, especially since disgust over Estrada was widespread among the AFP and PNP's middle-ranking officials and there were plans to arrest pro-Estrada officials, including PNP chief Gen. Panfilo Lacson.

US imperialism mobilized the military and police because it was anxious over the fact that street demonstrations had been gaining momentum since the night of January 16 and mass organizations had been exercising full initiative in ousting Estrada. It made sure that there would be a smooth transition from Estrada to Macapagal-Arroyo through the AFP/PNP and AFP chief Gen. Angelo Reyes' call for a "dignified exit" for Estrada. Estrada ostensibly refused to step down from the right of January 19 until he left Malacañang on the afternoon of January 20 despite the fact that his government had collapsed, in order to pave the way for negotiations and iron out issues for his "dignified exit. One of the principal issues was the protection of Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco's interests represented by Sec. Orlando Mercado and former Exec. Sec. Edgardo Angara.

Efforts to belittle the role of street demonstrations were made through conspiratorial negotiations between Estrada's camp and reactionary parties composing the United Opposition. The latter consists mainly of the Lakas-NUCD party headed by Ramos and Macapagal-

Arroyo. The forces who organized the demonstrations, as well as other anti-Estrada reactionaries, were excluded. Likewise, these reactionary conspirators tried to preempt the Mendiola march which was scheduled for the morning of January 20 by calling on all demonstrators to stay in EDSA and by hurriedly swearing in Macapagal-Arroyo despite unresolved legal issues.

Estrada was able to demand in these negotiations for his continued stay in Malacañang for another five to seven days. In fact, Macapagal-Arroyo was ready to wait this long before occupying Malacañang even though she had already been sworn in as president. Macapagal-Arroyo took this gamble despite the possibility that Estrada would organize countermeasures with funding and support provided by Danding Cojuangco.

The Left and Middle forces in the anti-Estrada united front agreed wisely to push through with the Mendiola march without distancing themselves from the EDSA forces. Majority of the 100,000 demonstrators in EDSA joined the march toward Mendiola on the morning of January 20 contrary to the call to remain in EDSA.

The militant demonstration in Mendiola of tens of thousands of people proved to be the decisive factor for Estrada to immediately vacate Malacañang. Fearing that the mass movement may once again gain the political initiative, Gen. Angelo Reyes and Gen. Jose Calimlim themselves went to Malacañang to save Estrada from the possible humiliation of being forcibly kicked out by the anti-Estrada demonstration and escort him “with dignity” to his mansion in San Juan.

#### **THE SOCIAL CRISIS WILL CONTINUE TO WORSEN UNDER THE MACAPAGAL-ARROYO REGIME**

The Party and revolutionary movement are aware of the currently existing balance of political and class forces and do not entertain any opportunist illusion that revolutionary change could take place or that it is possible for them to share political power due to the ouster of the US-Estrada regime. Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo succeeded as president of the reactionary government on the basis of the 1987 constitution which the majority of the reactionary class upholds in the desire to immediately resolve the severe political crisis.



Macapagal-Arroyo takes power at a time when the ruling system is undergoing a severe and continuing social crisis characterized by the deeply divided factions of the reactionary class, an economic and financial crisis, intensifying fascist cruelty by the state, widespread disgust among the people over massive poverty and oppression and the ever growing strength of the people's revolutionary struggle nationwide.

The material basis for the factionalization of the ruling class will continue to exist. The severe economic crisis limits opportunities for the peaceful sharing of perks and privileges among the various factions. On the one hand, politicians and big businesses that benefited from the Ramos and Aquino regimes and who were trampled on under the Estrada regime are now scrambling to reinstate themselves in power. Aside from this, the people have issued a serious call for the prosecution and punishment of all those involved in corruption, anomalies and criminal activities under the Estrada regime. On the other hand, in the name of “healing the wounds”, there are arrangements being made that would enable some of Estrada's minions to remain, particularly those who had been appointed by Danding Cojuangco, for the purpose of protecting his vast empire.

Likewise, the military is severely factionalized. In fact, from January 17-20, there were no less than seven factions all acting independently. Each one of these represent various reactionary politicians who wish to protect and advance their own interests.

Even reactionary economists expect the economic crisis to continue. Local businesses and foreign capital have run aground, not so much because of the “lack of confidence” in the previous government, but due to the international crisis characterized by the bursting of the US economic bubble, the continuing crisis in Japan, the withholding of funds by foreign financial institutions and the widespread destruction of economies due to liberalization and other WTO policy dictates. Government funds have dried up. The budget deficit for 2000 is expected to exceed P120 billion; and likewise expected to further balloon to more than P200 billion this year.

On the other hand, the Filipino people continue to suffer from severe poverty and oppression. The toiling masses are battered with problems of unemployment and layoffs, low wages, widespread landgrabbing in the

countryside, continually rising prices of oil and other basic commodities, lack of decent housing and other livelihood problems. The toiling masses are the targets of an utterly brutal counterrevolutionary war, especially in the countryside.

In the future, it will have become clearer that in truth, the economic and political crisis is not merely a consequence of the widespread corruption, rottenness and suppression that marked the Estrada clique's former rule; but of continued imperialist domination and exploitation and the subservience of the local ruling classes.

The suffering of the Filipino people and their exploitation at the hands of big foreign corporations, local big capitalists and big landlords will continue to spur them to tread the revolutionary path of social change.

#### INTENSIFY THE REVOLUTIONARY STRUGGLE

Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo is the current chief of the neocolonial puppet government. Her regime embodies the interests of foreign monopoly capitalism and that of the local ruling classes of the big comprador bourgeoisie and big landlords.

Nonetheless, the Macapagal-Arroyo government is remarkable for having been established on the basis of the strength of a democratic mass movement that ousted the despised and rotten Estrada government. At the core of this mass movement is the united front of the toiling masses, the petty bourgeoisie and the national bourgeoisie and anti-Estrada reactionaries.

At the start of her rule, Macapagal-Arroyo may take steps and issue policies addressing some democratic demands of the united front that catapulted her to power in order to woo its support at this period of consolidating her regime. The previous declaration of big business that it would stop layoffs of workers is in line with this, as is Macapagal-Arroyo's declaration on her first day in office that she would put a stop to the layoff of government employees.

The national-democratic forces may persevere in a critical alliance with the Macapagal-Arroyo regime on condition that her government immediately implements the following democratic actions:

- 1) Arrest, try and punish Estrada, the Marcoses

and all of the biggest cronies and plunderers and cause them to surrender their ill-gotten wealth. Terminate secret negotiations including those between the government and the Marcoses.

2) Indemnify all victims of martial law and total war.

3) Free all political prisoners, including Donato Continente and Juanito Itaas who have both been imprisoned for a period longer than their reduced sentences.

4) Junk Oplan Makabayan, Oplan Balangai, Oplan Pisces Alpha and other military campaigns that suppress the people and trample on their rights and livelihood.

5) Do away with antinational and antipeople laws and programs, including the Foreign Investments Act, Mining Act, Retail Trade Liberalization Law, policies that are in accordance with the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade and the dictates of the World Trade Organization.

6) Stop continued increases in the price of gasoline and implement a law that shall control gasoline prices without imposing added burdens on the people.

7) Implement a P125-increase in the workers' daily wage. Carry out programs for housing, health and other social services.

8) Put a stop to widespread land-use conversion by landlords and the misrepresentation as "land reform" of various schemes such as "corporativism".

9) Respect and implement earlier agreements between the GRP and NDFP, from The Hague Joint Declaration of 1992 up to the Comprehensive Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law of 1998.

10) Stop all scheduled joint US-RP military exercises and abrogate the Visiting Forces Agreement, Mutual Defense Treaty and other unequal treaties.

The Communist Party had earlier already declared the readiness of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines to resume peace talks with the GRP. It is proper to discuss first and foremost the implementation of previously signed agreements.

It also stands ready to receive the emissaries of the GRP to discuss the release of prisoners of war who had



been abandoned by the Estrada regime. In the same spirit, the NDFP expects the GRP to undertake steps to release the more than 200 political prisoners.

As time goes on, Macapagal-Arroyo's promises and declarations that she would address the national and democratic demands of the people will dwindle in significance along with her consolidation of her regime on the basis of antipeople, pro-imperialist and fascist policies and programs. The people's experience and victory in overthrowing the US-Estrada regime have raised the level of their militancy and capability to resist any undertaking by the Macapagal-Arroyo government to trample on their rights and welfare.

The people must consolidate their organizations, systematically sum up their experiences in overthrowing Estrada and stand ever firmly for their interests.

The Party and the entire revolutionary movement are determined and have the capability to reap the gains of the anti-Estrada struggle and advance the revolutionary

struggle on all fronts. The New People's Army shall continue to intensify the armed struggle in all guerrilla fronts nationwide by launching more and bigger tactical offensives. The biggest cronies and plunderers who benefited during the US-Estrada regime remain as targets, as with despised military units that owe blood debts to the people. Existing social conditions, especially in the countryside, continue to teach the people the correctness of advancing the revolutionary armed struggle.

Along with this, we shall continue to advance antifeudal struggles in the countryside, the building of revolutionary mass bases, the expansion of the national united front and the strengthening of the Communist Party and the people's army.

The entire revolutionary movement stands ready to take advantage of any twist in the political situation and cooperate with all forces or groups within or outside the government to advance the interests of the Filipino people.